



**STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Child and Adult Care Licensing Staff
CC: All Licensed Adult Care Providers

FROM: Lois Barrett Luke, Director of Child and Adult Care Licensing

DATE: October 13, 2009

RE: **Novel H1N1 and Seasonal Flu**

The elderly and adults with compromised health are some of the people most at risk from the H1N1 and seasonal flu viruses. Those with the highest rate of infection include persons with asthma, diabetes, or chronic heart disease. Those most at risk are also most in need of the vaccine. Therefore, it is important for adult care providers to stay informed about the latest developments in preventing the spread of influenza during this flu season.

Flu.gov was developed by the CDC and has a section devoted to providing comprehensive guidelines to assist caregivers of adults in group settings in preparing for flu season, recognizing symptoms and containing the spread of influenza as well as educating participants and their families.

Providers can also take these additional steps to prevent the spread of influenza:

- Develop and implement a contingency plan for staff and families in the event of
 - staff illness, to include a pool of substitutes
 - participants' illness
 - agency closure
- Invite local health professionals to meet with families and staff to answer their questions and concerns and discuss
 - symptoms and treatment
 - the importance of properly immunizing fragile adults and their caregivers and staff, including the H1N1 vaccine
 - keeping sick participants at home
 - staying home from work when symptoms arise
- Remain aware of recommendations made by the CDC and the local Health Department
- Conduct daily health checks of staff and participants

- Be diligent about
 - handwashing
 - sanitizing equipment and any hard surfaces in the agency – inside and out and in the vehicle – with which participants, staff or families may come in contact
- Develop and practice activities that address
 - handwashing
 - coughing and sneezing etiquette
 - sanitation
 - developing systems and routines for infection control to utilize throughout the year

With a few simple steps providers can make this flu season safer for the participants in their care, their families, staff and themselves.